Doukhobor Russian

The **Doukhobors** are a Spiritual Christians (folk Protestants) from Russia who in 1899 established a number of commune-style settlements in Western Canada. They have brought with them a Southern Russian dialect of their communities of origin, which over the following decades underwent some changes under the influence of the Canadian English environment and the speech of the Ukrainian settlers in Saskatchewan.

Over several generations, this dialect has been mostly lost, as the modern descendants of the original Doukhobor migrants to Canada are typically native English speakers, and when they do speak Russian, it is typically a fairly standard variety of it.

Doukhobor Russian	
Диалект духоборов Канады *Dialekt Duchoborov Kanady*	
Native to	British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, Canada.
Native speakers	Up to 30,000 in its heyday; hardly any by the year 2000
Language family	Indo-European ▪ Balto-Slavic ▪ Slavic ▪ East Slavic ▪ Russian ▪ **Doukhobor Russian**
Writing system	Cyrillic
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	–
Glottolog	*None*
IETF	`ru-CA`

Contents

Linguistic history of the Doukhobors

Features of the Doukhobor Russian dialect in Canada

Spelling of Doukhobor names in English

Main source

Additional references

Linguistic history of the Doukhobors

It is reasonable to assume that the formative period for the speech of the Doukhobors was the first four decades of the 19th century. It was in 1802 that the Doukhobors, as well as the members of Russia's other dissenter Christian groups, were encouraged to migrate to the Molochna River region, around Melitopol near Ukraine's Sea of Azov coast. Over the next 10–20 years, the Doukhobor, Molokan, and other settlers, speaking a variety of mostly Southern Russian dialects arrived to the Molochna from several provinces located, primarily, in what is today eastern Ukraine and south-central Russia.[1] In the settlers' villages an opportunity thus arose for the formation of a certain dialect koiné, based on Southern Russian and Eastern Ukrainian dialects.

Starting in 1841, the Doukhobors (as well as Molokans and certain other dissenters) were resettled from southern Ukraine to Transcaucasia, where they founded a number of villages surrounded by mostly non-Russian speaking neighbors (primarily Azerbaijanis in Elisabethpol Governorate, Armenians[2] in Tiflis Governorate, and likely a mix of both in the later (post-1878) settlements in Kars Oblast). These conditions allowed the dialect to develop in comparative isolation from the "mainstream" Russian.

With the migration of some 7,500 Doukhbors from Transcaucasia to Saskatchewan in 1899, and some smaller latecomer groups (both from Transcaucasia and from places of exile in Siberia and elsewhere), the dialect spoken in the Doukhobor villages of Transcaucasia was brought to the plains of Canada. From that point on it experienced influence from the English language of Canada and, during the years of Doukhobor stay in Saskatchewan, the speech of Doukhobor's Ukrainian neighbors.

A split in the Doukhobor community resulted in a large number of Doukhobors moving from Saskatchewan to south-eastern British Columbia around 1910. Those who moved (the so-called "Community Doukhobors" – followers of Peter Verigin's Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood – continued living a communal lifestyle for several more decades, and had a better chance to preserve the Russian language than the "Independent Doukhobors", who stayed in Saskatchewan as individual farmers.

By the 1970s, as most Russia-born members of the community died, English became the first language of the great majority of Canadian Doukhobors.[3] Their English speech is not noticeably different from that of other English-speaking Canadians of their provinces. Russian still remains in use, at least for religious use among those who do practise the Doukhobor religion. However, practising Doukhobors are a shrinking group, with only some 3,800 persons in Canada identifying themselves as members of the Doukhobor religion as of the Canada 2001 Census.

Features of the Doukhobor Russian dialect in Canada

According to Gunter Schaarschmidt's survey article ("Four norms ..."), research into the Russian spoken by Canada's Doukhobors has not been extensive. However, a number of articles, mostly published in the 1960s and 1970s, noted a variety of features in Doukhobors' Russian speech that were indeed characteristic of Southern, and in some cases Central Russian dialects, e.g. use of the Southern [h] where Standard Russian has [g].

Features characteristic of a number of locales in the East Slavic language space were noted as well, reflecting perhaps the heterogeneous origin of the Doukhobors' settlements in Molochna River after 1800, e.g., similarly to Belarusians, Doukhobor speakers don't palatalize [r] in "редко" (*redko*, 'seldom'). Remarkable was the dropping of the final -t in the 3rd person singular form of verbs. This can be considered a Ukrainian feature, and it is also attested in some Russian dialects spoken in Southern Ukraine (e.g., Nikolaev, not too far from the Doukhobors' old homeland on the Molochna).

As with other immigrant groups, the Russian speech of the Doukhobors uses English loanwords for some concepts that they had not encountered until moving to Canada. [4]

Spelling of Doukhobor names in English

- Denisoff
- Kalesnikoff
- Malakoff
- Saprikin
- Postnikoff
- Chernenkoff
- Stoochnoff
- Salekin
- Postnikoff
- Plotnikoff

Main source

- Makarova V. 2012. The use of Russian in contemporary Doukhobor prayer service. In: International scientific research Internet conference "Current issues in philology and methods of teaching foreign languages"., 1–29 February 2012, Novosibirsk, Russia. Международная научно-практическая Интернет-конференция «Актуальные проблемы филологии и

методики преподавания иностранных языков», 1 февраля - 29 февраля 2012 года; http://ffl.nspu.net/?p=144
- Makarova V. A., Usenkova, E.V., Evdokimova, V.V. Evgrafova, K. V. 2011. The Language of Saskatchewan Doukhobors: Introduction to analysis. Izvestija Vysshix uchebnyx zavedenij [The News of Higher Schools]. Serija Gumanitarnyje nauki [Humanities]. Razdel Lingvistika [Linguistics section]. Vol 2 (2), pp 146–151. http://www.isuct.ru/e-publ/gum/ru/2011/t02n02/philology-and-linguistics
- Schaarschmidt Gunter(University of Victoria, Canada) Four norms – one culture: Doukhobor Russian in Canada (http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/06_1/schaarschmidt.htm)
- Schaarschmidt, G. 2012. Russian language history in Canada. Doukhobor internal and external migrations: effects on language development and structure. In: V. Makarova (Ed), Russian Language Studies in North America: the New Perspectives from Theoretical and Applied Linguistics. London/New York: Anthem Press.pp 235–260. www.anthempress.com

Additional references

- Doukhobor Historical Maps (https://web.archive.org/web/20120204174503/http://www.doukhobor.org/Maps.htm) by Jonathan J. Kalmakoff (Doukhobor Genealogy Website)
- Doukhobor Russian Paintings (https://web.archive.org/web/20080512010252/http://homecast.net/~johnl007/doukhobor/index.html) – Original artwork depicting their culture, heritage, and spirit

1. See J.J. Kalmakoff's map, "Doukhobor Resettlement to Tavria" (Doukhobor Genealogy Website).
2. Tiflis Governorate was in Georgia, it is ethnic Armenians who populated its Samtskhe-Javakheti area, where the Doukhobor villages were
3. Dr. John I. Postnikoff Doukhobors: An Endangered Species (http://www.doukhobor.org/postnikoff.html) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20080416075358/http://www.doukhobor.org/postnikoff.html) 2008-04-16 at the Wayback Machine MIR magazine, No. 16 (Grand Forks, BC: MIR Publication Society, May 1978) (Doukhobor Genealogy Website).
4. Schaarschmidt, Gunter (2012). "10". *Russian Language History in Canada. Doukhobor Internal and External Migrations: Effect on language development and structure* (https://books.google.com/books?id=gRcx9ly2pPIC&lpg=PA245&pg=PA235#v=onepage&q&f=false) (in ed. Makarova, Veronika. *Russian Language Studies in North America: New Perspectives from Theoretical and Applied Linguistics* ed.). London: Anthem Press. pp. 235–260. ISBN 9780857287847. Retrieved 20 June 2020.

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Doukhobor_Russian&oldid=965486306"

This page was last edited on 1 July 2020, at 16:16 (UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.